



Centerline

Fall 2008



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Idaho Driver Education Newsletter



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Tom Luna, State Superintendent of Public Instruction



Brian's Blog



I hope you are enjoying the crisp Fall mornings and cool evenings. It is a beautiful time of year in Idaho!

For me, it's still strange not showing up to school and teaching everyday—after 15 years of doing it. This will be my second year out of the classroom—but I won't go into how much (or little) I miss it... :)

As I type this, Joyce is looking up school calendars in each region of the state to find the best dates for spring workshops. Preparing for spring workshops in September? That's right! Hotels have to be reserved, caterers hired, and workshop material put together. For such a simple couple of days, it takes time. If you have specific ideas or topics you'd like covered this year, please let us know right away!

In addition, I'm teaching a new teacher certification class that just began September 1st. A small group this time, but additional instructors to help your programs grow. That's the point. The new \$15 permit came at a bad time for public programs, because the intention was to up the reimbursement and help every school double their numbers. 47,000 teens are licensed each year in Idaho and we are only teaching 20,000 of them. We should be teaching the other 27,000!

We are waiting until spring to submit our proposed rule changes. I highlighted those in the last Centerline, but the intention is to continue to streamline procedures and policies and help programs. The effort made that the rule committee that met that day was to do just that, as well as make the rules the same for all programs. If we can accomplish that, it'll be a huge step forward.

No longer do we want you to update your contact information online. It worked long enough to get most of what we needed, but from now on, simply call or email if you have any changes!

Thank you for what you do!

2008 ADTSEA Conference

July 27-July 30 was the 52nd annual American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association conference in Fort Worth, Texas.

I arrived a few days early to spend time with other state coordinators, and we shared program goals and challenges. During the main conference I spoke with several influential individuals, including Fred Motolla, who I have openly disagreed with, but he is the genius behind much of what we do. He and I talked about online learning—and I was surprised to hear that he is putting some of his activities for visual search skills online! You'll see these online soon at: <http://nidb.us/>. I was reminded how powerful his ABCD cards are. And you can make these yourself out of colored 3x5 cards. All “As” are one color, “Bs”, another, etc. Then when you ask the class a question, they have to hold up their answer. This way, EVERY student participates and you get valuable feedback on who's getting it and who's not. Or if none of them understand it or are paying attention! Try it! This is just good teaching!



The first keynote speaker was Jeff Crilley, a news reporter. His very powerful presentation focused on how to get free PR for our Driver Ed. programs. Good stuff. We don't do a very good job with that here in Idaho, but it's important to use your local news media to highlight what you are doing and share successes. Try to get some photos in the paper of your students in action!

Next was Bryan Gregory from Advance Auto Parts. Their website, <http://www.advanceautoparts.com/>, includes wonderful videos on car care and other topics! These are great, SHORT video clips that you can put into your curriculum very easily. Check them out!

Lou Gervino, who comes every year from Manitoba, Canada, presented more on his wonderful TV series, *The 60 Second Driver*. He has teamed up with his national TV channel to provide hundreds of 60 second driving lessons that show throughout the day, year 'round! He is “the man” when it comes to this concept! Check out http://www.mpi.mb.ca/English/dr_tips/60sec.html. You will find all the video clips you will EVER need! I am not kidding!

2008 ADTSEA Conference, Continued...

Have you heard of the “Teens in the Driver Seat” program? It is a program devoted to STOPPING the number one killer of teenagers in America! The cool thing? Their website was created by teens for teens and includes information for teens starting a club or group at their school that focuses on responsible driving. Check out <http://www.t-driver.com/> for more!

It was recommended that states make Driver Education a lifelong pursuit. Isn't that what we teach? Then why don't we teach pre-teens, young adults, remedial, and mature driver courses? Anyone want to help get this going in Idaho? How about a private school that focuses on retired individuals? More classes that help people reduce the points on their driving record? Advanced drivers ed?

Did you know Oregon reimburses their schools, private and public, \$210 per student? We're \$125 for public only.

Jim Wright from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration spoke about the new national Driver Education standards that are being written. (Note: I'm on this committee. My input is mostly quality online coursework.) New standards will be published early next year and Idaho will certainly adopt those and make any additions/adjustments that may be necessary.

Karen Holm from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia spoke about the National Teen Driver Safety Week. Did you know there was one? October 19-25. We have “Red Ribbon Week” but driving kills way more teens than drugs do—WAY more—so why aren't we creating activities for this week? If you are in a position to make this happen, PLEASE look into it and help make Idaho teens aware of this campaign! Check out <http://www.chop.edu/consumer/jsp/division/generic.jsp?id=86589> For more!

Oh! By the way, if you haven't been to Texas, it's HOT. So sticky humid and hot in late July that by the time I walked two blocks to Starbucks for a coffee, I was drenched and not craving a hot drink anymore...

There were dozens of other speakers and activities, but these were the highlights for me. It's like most conferences: a chance to get together, learn, and share. Would the experience be the same as monthly webinars? Probably not.

NHTSA Update

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration works non-stop on the issues that mean so much to us. Recent numbers (shown below) demonstrate how different

Percentage of fatal crashes by characteristic, 2004			
Driver Age:	16	17-19	20-49
Driver error	78	69	55
Speeding	39	33	23
Single vehicle	52	45	39
3+ occupants	29	24	18
Drivers killed with .08+ BAC	13	25	44
Sources - FARS, NHTSA 2004			

ent teen drivers are from older drivers. 16 year olds continue to have the highest number of fatal errors, high speed fatalities, single-vehicle fatalities, and fatalities with 3 or more occupants. They are the lowest in D.U.I. fatalities.

If you haven't heard about the study done on Texas' parent-taught driver ed program, it has become the greatest support we have for Driver Education. In April of 1997, parents became eligible to teach their own kids to drive, something we get asked occasionally here, because individuals seem to think that just because they can drive they can teach. The full report is 216 pages long, but the following paragraph sums it up:

"Based on the analysis of information derived from nine focus groups, the responses of approximately 500 young drivers to a statewide survey, and analysis of more than 1.4 million Texas driver records, there is evidence to suggest that the parent-taught driver education program has a negative influence on the overall safety of novice drivers in Texas, especially in terms of young driver crash involvement." (nhtsa.org)

A study done by NHTSA reports that Graduated Driver Licensing programs (GDL) reduce teen crashes by 11%. This strengthens our argument for continuing and improving our GDL laws here in Idaho.

D.U.I fatalities are down in 32 states, but up for motorcycle riders. Overall fatalities are the lowest they've been since 1994!

In the 1970s, 95% of teens eligible for Driver Education received training.

NHTSA Update, Continued...

Today, there are minimal or no funds available for state Driver Education programs. Currently, only 17 states have a funded supervisor position to manage the programs in their state.

The following states require 30 classroom hours, 6 hours of behind-the-wheel and 6 hours of observation: Arizona, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

Alabama and Kansas use a performance-based program.

Alaska only requires 6 hours of btw. Colorado is 30-6-4. Connecticut requires 30-8 (22 hrs of the classroom and the 8 hours btw are done at home). Delaware requires 30-7. DC only requires the 50 supervised driving hours. Florida requires a 4 hour course. Kentucky requires 30-6-4. Michigan is 24-6. Montana requires 42-6-12.



National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Our Mission: Save lives, prevent injuries, reduce vehicle-related crashes

Nebraska requires 20-5. Nevada is 30-5 but every three hours of driving counts towards 1 hour of classroom. New Hampshire: 30-10-6. New Mexico: 33-7. New York: 24-6-18. N. Carolina: 30 hrs. classroom only. Ohio: 24-8. Rhode Island: 33 hrs. classroom. Texas: 32-7-7 and can be parent-taught. Virginia: 36-7-7.

In summary: 31 states require Driver Education as part of their GDL program. 39 require supervised driving. 45 have nighttime restrictions and 40 have passenger restrictions (including Idaho!).



Don't forget to vote Nov. 4th!
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More Like Motorcycle Training?



In mid-September I took the Star motorcycle training course. Big deal, right? Well, in my family, motorcycles are not discussed, let alone ridden. My oldest brother was a semi-professional motocross racer and was quite skilled at riding and racing dirt bikes. In 1980 he bought a street bike and on April 30, 1980, wrecked it coming down Bogus Basin Road in Boise. Either a malfunction or, most likely going too fast, the bike slipped out from beneath him and he slammed head first into the guardrail. His helmet wasn't enough to save his life. He died in the arms of his best friend.

I have been going against my family's wishes since last spring, when I bought a little 50cc Honda Ruckus scooter and began using it to commute. The 125 mpg was exceptional but the 37 mph was pretty lousy. But I enjoyed every minute of riding and found myself dialoging with my brother as I rode; kind of a, "Hey bro, I see why you loved riding so much!" kind of thing. I decided that enough time had passed between 1980 and 2008 and it was time for me to become a trained rider.

Scooters don't require shifting and only weigh a couple hundred pounds, if that. They are easy to ride, but the huge increase in un-trained and young scooter riders around the country has resulted in more dangerous riders on the road.

Taking the classroom portion of the Star program reminded me of our DE programs quite a bit. In fact, they use the terms: SIPDE, SMOG, and others that you know. I was impressed with the instruction, and Harry, the retired Boise City motorcycle cop and current Star instructor, did a great job. The old school "recite after me" and rote memory style of learning seemed old fashioned but in the end is why I remember that ONE-C stands for "turn engine valve ON", "shift to NEUTRAL", "turn on the ENGINE" cut off switch, and "Hold in the Clutch".

I chose to ride a bright blue Kawasaki cruiser. The instruction was very step-by-step, demonstrating a skill, doing "static demonstrations", letting us practice with supervision, then giving us plenty of parking lot practice. The first lesson, and I was nervous about shifting, gave me immediate confidence and I didn't have a problem with shifting all day. We simply rocked back and forward on our hills while we played with the clutch and the friction point while we were in 1st gear.

More Like Motorcycles Training, Continued...

Once we had that down, we kept our feet down and walked the bike across the parking lot between two cones, still idling and holding the clutch at the friction point. From there we took our feet off the pegs and balanced the bike the same distance, then for the next four hours practices up and downshifting through and around cones. The instructors used hand-signals so we knew what they wanted us to do.

I took the Star course at Meridian Middle School in Meridian, on the old Driver Ed range. The tower is still there, and the classroom portion of the course is held in the tower itself. It was fun to stand in the tower and look out over the course, imagining the day when Driver Ed was taught using bullhorns or a PA system and students in their own, numbered cars down below.

I found myself so impressed with how quickly we all got comfortable with the motorcycles. (Except one older lady who dropped her beautiful cruiser the first time she got off. She was a scooter rider and didn't realize you have to put the kickstand down before dismounting). I went from a little 50cc automatic scooter to a 250cc cruiser that required some real skill. It as an absolute blast and I didn't want to stop riding!

The relevant lesson I walked (drove) away with is that Driver Education could be more like the Star program. I hear stories that students are on the highways and freeways or downtown on their first drive! We ASSUME too much!

I wonder if we should slow down, think like someone who has never driven a 3,000 pound car before, and follow Star's example: have students show you starting and stopping several times. And stay in the parking lot to run through cones, forward and backwards. Be repetitive at the expense of your own boredom! Go through each skill over and over and ask them to explain it all to you! Have them use commentary driving while they maneuver the parking lot. I believe we underestimate the use of the parking lot and OVER-estimate our students' skills and confidence.

If you are not already doing so, try some of these ideas out and let me know how it goes! I'd LOVE the hear some feedback and get some photos of your parking lot work! And consider taking the training yourself. You WILL look at motorcycles differently and it will help you be a better instructor.

Increasing the Driving Age?

An influential auto safety group is calling on states to raise the age for getting a driver's license to 17 or even 18.

Adrian Lund, president of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, realizes the idea is a tough sell, but that research clearly shows raising the driving age saves lives. And saving lives is the intent.

Not surprisingly, most teens hate the idea. And parents don't feel much different. They appreciate the convenience of their teen having a driver's license.

One parent who was interviewed for the story where I got this information stated that raising the driving age will make teens less responsible and dependent on parents until they go to college.

Others against the idea argue that it is not age or lack of experience causing death on the road. Instead, it is speeding and drinking and driving, which is a problem for drivers of all ages.



But multiple studies, including one done in New Jersey, where teens aren't licensed until 17, clearly show that teen fatality rates in cars is lower than surrounding states.

Where does Idaho stand on this issue? We are one of the few states still allowing students to take Driver Education at 14-1/2 and get their license at 15. Should we propose a change? Western states are not the same as eastern states. We have longer distances to travel, less mass transportation, and more young people working around the farm. But should we consider raising the age?

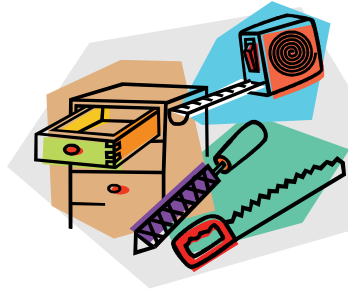
Found online at: <http://www.iihs.org>

2007 Idaho Traffic Crashes



- The number of motor vehicle crashes increased by 9.2% to 26,452 in 2007. This change is mostly due the change in reporting for property damage.
- The number of fatalities DECREASED from 267 in 2006 to 252 in 2007. A 6% decrease.
- Just over 40% of motor vehicle fatalities were the result of impaired driving. 101 persons were killed because of this in 2007, with 93% either the impaired driver, a person riding with an impaired driver, and impaired ATV driver, or an impaired pedestrian.
- Idaho's seatbelt use decreased slightly to 785 in 2007. Only 35% of the motor vehicle occupants killed in a crash were wearing a seatbelt.
- Aggressive driving contributed to 54% of all crashes and 43% of fatalities.
- Youthful drivers, 15-19, continue to be over-involved in motor vehicle crashes. In 2007 they were 3 times as likely as all other drivers to be involved in a fatal and injury crash.
- There were 17 pedestrians and 2 bicyclists killed in 2007.
- The number of motorcycle fatalities DECREASED by 23% in 2007. There were 29 motorcycle fatalities. 69% of motorcycle fatalities involved just one motorcycle, while just over half (51%) of ALL motorcycle crashes involved just one motorcycle.

*2009 Workshop Dates!



February 5-6	Nampa
February 9-10	Boise A
February 11-12	Boise B
March 9-10	Twin Falls
April 7-8	Idaho Falls A
April 9-10	Idaho Falls B
April 23-24	Lewiston
May 7-8	Pocatello/Chubbuck
May 14-15	CDA

*These dates *shouldn't* change, but may!

More information about times, places, and topics will be coming soon!

Didn't come last year? You'll need to be there this year! Came last year but want to come again? You are welcome too! I'd love to see everyone there!

Have you Seen This Sign?

